

Statistical Bulletin No. 11
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SYDNEY CORONERS' COURTS:
STATISTICS 1974.

Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research
N.S.W. Department of the Attorney-General and of Justice
Box 6, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W., 2001

City Coroner: J.B. Goldrick, Stipendiary Magistrate
Assistant City Coroner: F.J. Mackenzie, Stipendiary Magistrate
Coroners Court
44-46 Parramatta Road, Glebe, 2037

SYDNEY CORONERS' COURTS

STATISTICS 1974

City Coroner J.B. Goldrick S.M.
Assistant City Coroner F.J. Mackenzie S.M.

Inquests and Magisterial Inquiries	<u>1972</u> 1309	<u>1973</u> 1475	<u>1974</u> 1263
Fire Inquiries	<u>13</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>8</u>
	1322	1493	1271
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<u>Findings as to Manner and Cause of Death</u>			
Suicide	<u>1972</u> 357	<u>1973</u> 376	<u>1974</u> 311
Cause own Death whilst Mentally ill	4	10	8
Open Finding	138	99	141
Accidental Drug Death	-	-	30
Accidental Drowning	-	-	65
Traffic Accident (Including where adjourned and followed by committal proceedings when person charged manslaughter or culpable driving)	359	479	366
Other Accidents (1972 and 1973 include Drug and Drowning)	343	382	248
Adjourned and followed by committal proceedings when person charged murder or non-traffic manslaughter	39	49	31
Killed by Person since deceased or unknown	10	7	11
Excusable and Justifiable Homicide	2	1	1
Natural Causes	<u>57</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>51</u>
	1309	1475	1263
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N.B. Figures relate to Inquiries conducted in respective years, not to death occurring. Inquests are normally finalised within 4 months of death.

COMMENT

The total number of inquests etc. held in 1974 was considerably less than in 1973 and somewhat less than in 1972.

The inquest into the Bankstown mid-air collision, heard by Mr. B. Cook, S.M. with a coroner's jury of six, extended over 42 sitting days from 21.10.74 to 19.12.74. One other death involved a total of 13 sitting days.

SYDNEY CORONERS' COURTS 1974

SUICIDE FINDINGS

TOTAL 311

1.	<u>SEX</u>	
	Male	200
	Female	<u>111</u>
		311
		—

2.	<u>AGE</u>	
	To 12 years	-
	13 - 19	12
	20s	61
	30s	61
	40s	75
	50s	52
	60s	30
	70 plus	18
	Not stated	<u>2</u>
		311
		—

3.	<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>	
	Married	132
	" (Separated)	30
	Single	95
	Divorced	16
	Widow/Widower	36
	Not stated	<u>2</u>
		311
		—

4.	<u>LIVING ALONE</u>	
	Yes	108
	No	200
	Not stated	<u>3</u>
		311
		—

5.	<u>METHOD</u>	
	OVERDOSE	113
	-Barbiturate	80
	-Other sedative	20
	-Anti-depressant	9
	-Others	<u>4</u>
		113
		—

	SHOOTING	56
	HANGING	34
	GAS EXHAUST	34

GAS APPLIANCE	30
POISONING	8
JUMPING	7
DROWNING	7
BURNING	5
LIE IN FRONT OF TRAIN	5
CUT THROAT	3
ELECTROCUTION	3
SUFFOCATION	2
LIE IN FRONT OF CAR	2
CRASH CAR	1
STABBING	1
	<u>311</u>
	—
6. <u>ALCOHOL (Blood)</u>	
Nil	185
Below .08%	33
.08 plus	61
Not stated	32
	<u>311</u>
	—
7. <u>SUICIDE NOTE - Found and Produced, including Tape Recordings</u>	
Yes	121
No	190
	<u>311</u>
	—
8. <u>PSYCHIATRIC PATIENT</u> - Any treatment of a Psychiatric nature	
Yes	153
No	139
Not stated	19
	<u>311</u>
	—
9. <u>PREVIOUS INDICATIONS</u> - Prior attempts or threats	
Yes	169
No	130
Not stated	12
	<u>311</u>
	—
10. <u>COUNTRY OF ORIGIN</u>	
Australia	221
United Kingdom	22
New Zealand	6
Other Overseas	61
Not stated	1
	<u>311</u>
	—

OTHER OVERSEAS

Yugoslavia	11
Germany	8
Holland	5
Hungary	5
Italy	4
Finland	4
Poland	3
Czechoslovakia	3
Austria	2
Hong Kong	2
Ireland	2
Canada	1
China	1
France	1
Greece	1
New Caledonia	1
Norway	1
Rhodesia	1
Romania	1
Russia	1
Singapore	1
Sweden	1
Turkey	1
	<u>61</u>

11. OCCUPATION

MALES

Professional	7
Commercial	20
Skilled	25
Semi-skilled	46
Unskilled	38
Pensioner	36
Unemployed	14
Retired	5
Student	7
Not stated	2
	<u>200</u>

FEMALES

Home duties	46
Pensioner	25
Employed	30
Unemployed	3
Not stated	7
	<u>111</u>

FEMALES EMPLOYED

Office work	11
Nurse	9
Factory work	3
Housemaid	2
Barmaid	2
Social worker	1
Teacher	1
Prisoner	1
	<u>30</u>

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OPEN FINDINGS

No evidence Manner and Cause of Death, or either	37
Left "open" as between suicide or accident	<u>104</u>
Total	<u>141</u>

OPEN - SUICIDE OR ACCIDENT

1. <u>SEX</u>		2. <u>AGE</u>	
Male	53	To 12 years	-
Female	<u>51</u>	13-19	4
	104	20s	33
		30s	13
		40s	18
		50s	16
		60s	9
		70 plus	<u>11</u>
			104

3. MANNER OF DEATH

Overdose of Drugs	66
Gassing	12
Fall from height	7
Drowning	6
Struck by or fall from train	5
Hanging	3
Shooting	3
Motor Vehicle Accident	1
Unknown	<u>1</u>
	104

4. DRUG OVERDOSES

Barbiturate	28
Other Sedatives	26
Anti-Depressants	6
Alcohol	1
Others	<u>5</u>
	66

5. MORE LIKELY MANNER OF DEATH

Suicide	46
Accident	35
Unknown	22
Natural Cause	<u>1</u>
	104

6. REASON FOR OPEN FINDING

Insufficient Evidence	21
Evidence Ambiguous	24
Lack Evidence Intention	21
Addicted or Habituated	
Drugs	19
Possible Mental Illness	13
Alcohol Factor	4
Decomposition too advanced	<u>2</u>
	104
	—

SYDNEY CORONERS' COURT 1974

ACCIDENTAL (NON-INTENDED) DRUG DEATHS

1.	<u>HARD DRUGS</u> (Non-Sedative)			4
	Morphine	3		
	Cocaine	1		
2.	<u>ALCOHOL</u> (Alone)			9
	Blood/Alcohol %	.265, .325, .390, .400, .420, .425, .560, .580, .585		
3.	<u>SEDATIVES. HYPNOTICS</u> (Alone)			10
	Chloral Hydrate (Dormel)	5		
	Methaqualone	2		
	Barbiturate + Valium	1		
	Librium	1		
	Phentoin Primidone	1		
4.	<u>SEDATIVES + ALCOHOL</u>			5
	Dormel	1	<u>Blood/Alcohol %</u>	
	Barbiturate	3	.055	
	Valium	1	.125	
			.270	
			.320	
5.	<u>OTHERS</u>			2
	Antihistamine Tablets (Child 2 years)	1		
	Strychnine (Child 12 months, Taken from Garbage Can)	1		
			<u>Total</u>	<u>30</u>
6.	<u>SEX</u>		7. <u>AGE</u>	
	Male	18	To 12 years	2
	Female	<u>12</u>	13-19	1
		30	20s	8
			30s	4
			40s	6
			50s	6
			60s	3
			70 plus	<u>-</u>
				30
8.	<u>ADDICTED OR HABITUATED TO DRUGS</u> (Including Alcohol)			
	Yes	21		
	No	<u>9</u>		
		30		
		<u>-</u>		

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<u>ACCIDENTAL DROWNINGS</u>		Total <u>65</u>
1. <u>SEX</u>	2. <u>AGE</u>	
Male	To 12 years	28
Female	13-19	8
	20s	12
	30s	5
	40s	1
	50s	5
	60s	3
	70 plus	3
		<u>65</u>
		—
3. <u>CIRCUMSTANCES</u>		
Home Pool - Infant		19
- Others		2
Accidental Falls - Fishpond, Waterfalls, etc.		
- Infant		4
- Others		3
In bath - Infant		2
- Others		4
Boating & Canoeing		5
Drunken Fall		5
Rock Fisherman		3
Swimming - Still Water		2
Public Swimming Pool - Infant		1
- Others		2
Surf		2
River		2
Flooded Creek		2
At Sea		2
Senile or Mental Wanderer		2
Car into River		1
Playing Canal		1
Attempted Rescue		1
		<u>65</u>
		—
4. <u>SWIMMING ABILITY</u>		
Good		17
Fair		3
Slight		3
Nil (Including Infants)		31
Not Known		11
		<u>65</u>
		—

5. COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Australia	47
U.K.	5
N.Z.	2
Yugoslavia	2
Japan	2
Czechoslovakia	1
France	1
Greece	1
Italy	1
Lebanon	1
Mauritius	1
Sweden	<u>1</u>
	65
	—

6. ALCOHOL (Blood)

Nil (Including Infants)	51
Below .08%	3
.08 plus	7
Not Known	<u>4</u>
	65
	—

7. INFANT HOME POOL DROWNINGS

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>
Total such Drownings	7	14	19
Total Accidental Drownings	46	57	65
Proportion	15%	25%	29%

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TRAFFIC ACCIDENT DEATHS

The table clearly indicates the status (Driver, Passenger, etc.) of Traffic Accident Victims together with sex, age and alcohol factor. THE FIGURES CERTAINLY UNDERSTATE THE ALCOHOL FACTOR. Many victims survive for considerable periods after injury. Where death occurs more than 24 hours after injury, blood alcohol analysis is not ordered. This accounts for the 98 (27%) "Not known" cases. Survival even for a few hours will result in a lower reading and may result in a "Nil" reading. In addition, the figures do not make reference to drivers involved in fatal crashes but who survive them and frequently have consumed a considerable quantity of alcohol.

As for previous years, the figures show that those most at risk on the roads are pedestrians (167 out of 366 or 46%) and of pedestrians the very young and the very old are the primary victims.

		Driver	Passenger	M/Cycle Rider	Pillion	Pedal Cycle etc.	Pedes- trian	Total
		69	69	48	3	10	167	366
S E X	M	60	28	45	1	9	113	256
	F	9	41	3	2	1	54	110
To 12 yrs			6			4	34	44
13-19		12	11	12	2	4	8	49
20s		25	26	31	1		7	90
30s		4	6	5			7	22
A G E	40s	11	1				14	26
	50s	9	9				33	51
	60s	6	5			2	20	33
	70 plus	2	5				44	51
Not known		14	15	18			51	98
Nil (Incl. Children)		29	35	14	2	10	86	176
A L C O H O L	Below .08%	1	5	2			6	14
	.08-.150	8	3	9	1			21
	.155-.250	15	11	5			13	44
	.255 plus	2					11	13

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OTHER ACCIDENTS
248

TOTAL

(i.e. Excluding Accidental Drug, Drowning and Road
Traffic Deaths)

CIRCUMSTANCES OF THESE ACCIDENTS FOR INQUESTS HELD
JULY - DECEMBER 1974

		<u>TOTALS</u>
<u>FALLS</u>		
Drunken	10	
At Work	8	
From Train (One Youth Skylarking)	3	
From Racehorse	1	
From Home scaffold	1	
Pushing car over cliff for insurance	1	
Attempting Break & Enter	1	
Others (Majority Aged Pensioners slipping)	24	49
<u>BURNS</u>		
Smoking in Bed	9	
Electric Radiator	4	
Gas Fire	2	
Shower	1	
Fire in Flat	1	
14 yr-old Boy Lighting Cigarette when Petrol on Clothes	1	18
<u>INJURIES</u>		
Mid-Air Collision	4	
Hit or Run over by Train	3	
Crushed during Home Car Repairs	2	
Tree fell on House	1	

Football	1	
13 yr-old Boy Playing on Rolling Concrete Pipes	1	
Struck by Heavy Sportsground Gate in High Wind	1	13
<u>ELECTROCUTION</u>		
Faulty Appliances	5	
Home Renovations	1	
Pantehnicon Engaging Overhead Wires	1	7
<u>FACTORY & SHIP</u>		
Drawn into Dangerous Machinery	4	
Struck by Machinery	1	
Hydraulic Lift Collapse	1	
Loading Ship	1	7
<u>GASSED</u>		
Faulty Appliance	3	
Stove Left On	3	6
<u>FOOD</u>		
Choking	4	
Chicken Bone Perforating Colon	1	5
<u>SUFFOCATION</u>		
Buried Digging Trench	1	
By smoke from fire in house	1	
Aged Woman in collapsed folding bed	1	3
<u>STRANGULATION</u>		
10 months old child by Toy Telephone Cord	1	<u>1</u>
TOTAL FOR SECOND HALF 1974		<u>109</u>